Prawn Culture Project in West Bengal

1371. SHRI RAMNARAYAN GOSWAMI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any Prawn Culture Project in West Bengal with the financial assistance from the Department of Bio-technology and

(b) if so, the name of the firm and its location and the year of commissioning of the project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA): (a) and (b) The Department of Biotechnology at present is not supporting any prawn culture project in West Bengal. However recently the Department has received a Reasarch & Development project on development of semi-intensive farming practices for culture of tiger prawn from West Bengal. This is under processing.

World position of Science and Technology manpower

1372. SHRI RAGHAVJI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what is the world position of Science and Technology manpower of India in terms of number and quality in bio-technology;

(b) what efforts are being made to be in the forefront of these technologies;

(c) how does India's situation compare with U.S.A. Europe and Japan; and

(d) what are the time-bound programmes to cope up with these technologies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA): (a) Biotechnology is a multi-disciplinary area involving physical sciences, life sciences, engineering sciences etc. Furthermore this whole area is new and developing very rapidly. In view of its scientific and industrial importance, all developed countries have launched major programmes of manpower development in this multi-disciplinary area. India has also launched such programmes for the last 8—10 years in particular. Under these rapidly changing conditions, it is very difficult to precisely state India's position with reference to other countries in the world.

(b) 25 leading universities and other institutions are currently being supported by the Department to initiate and support specific programmes of manpower development at Master's and post-doctoral levels provide multi-disciplinary training. About 300 graduates are passing out every year from these institutes. In addition a number of thrust areas in Research and Development programmes in agriculture human health, afforestation and environment, animal husbandry, aquaculture and industrial biotechnology have been identified for research funding and support. Besides many of the products of indigenous research have been scaled up as demonstration programmes.

(c) It is clear from various reports that are available that even advanced countries like USA, Europe and Japan have launched major manpower training programmes in the area of biotech-